

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A computer configuration modification method comprising:

storing hardware configuration information comprising information regarding hardware configuration of a computer, a hardware contract renewal notification destination for the hardware of the computer, information regarding program configuration of the computer, and a program contract renewal notification destination for the program of the computer;

upon reception of a configuration modification request for the hardware configuration and program configuration of the computer to be modified, transmitting the information regarding the hardware configuration to be modified to the hardware contract renewal notification destination in order to modify the fee to be paid for the modified hardware, and transmitting the information regarding the hardware configuration to be modified and the information regarding the program configuration to be modified to the program contract renewal notification destination in order to modify the fee to be paid for the modified program;

when license information transmitted from the program contract renewal notification destination is inputted, modifying the hardware configuration based on the information regarding the hardware configuration to be modified and modifying the program configuration of the program which operates on the modified hardware based on the information regarding the hardware configuration to be modified and the information regarding the program configuration to be modified;

receiving billing information for the modified hardware and the modified program;

determining whether or not the hardware configuration and program configuration contained in the transmitted license information match the modified hardware and modified program corresponding to the [[received]] result as to whether the fee has been paid or not about the billing information; and

if the hardware configuration and program configuration contained in the transmitted license information do not match the modified hardware and modified program corresponding to the [[received]] result as to whether the fee has been paid or not about the billing information, then halting the configuration modification of the computer.

2. (original) The computer configuration modification method according to Claim 1, wherein the license information includes a license key, and wherein the hardware configuration and the program configuration of the computer are modified based on the license key.

3. (original) The computer configuration modification method according to Claim 2, further comprising making a determination as to whether or not to perform the configuration modification based on a period of validity comprised in the license key.

4. (original) The computer configuration modification method of Claim 2, further comprising:

comparing the hardware configuration with the license key;

if the license key contains a permissible hardware amount which is smaller than an actual hardware amount of the hardware configuration, then modifying a hardware amount used by the program of the computer to the permissible hardware amount indicated by the license key; and

if the license key contains a permissible hardware amount which is greater than the actual hardware amount of the hardware configuration, then modifying a hardware amount used by the program of the computer to the actual hardware amount of the hardware configuration.

5. (previously presented) The computer configuration modification method according to Claim 1, wherein when the configuration modification is performed, the configuration of the program which operates on the modified hardware is modified based on the modified hardware configuration.

6. (canceled)

7. (previously presented) The computer configuration modification method according to Claim 1, wherein the hardware configuration is modified when license information transmitted from the hardware contract renewal notification destination and license information transmitted from the program contract renewal notification destination are inputted.

8. (currently amended) In a computer readable medium containing a computer configuration modification program for modifying configuration of a computer, the computer configuration modification program comprising:

code for storing hardware configuration information comprising information regarding hardware configuration of a computer, a hardware contract renewal notification destination for the hardware of the computer, information regarding program configuration of the computer, and a program contract renewal notification destination for the program of the computer;

code for, upon reception of a configuration modification request for the hardware configuration and program configuration of the computer to be modified, transmitting the information regarding the hardware configuration to be modified to the hardware contract renewal notification destination in order to modify the fee to be paid for the modified hardware, and transmitting the information regarding the hardware configuration to be modified and the information regarding the program configuration to be modified to the program contract renewal notification destination in order to modify the fee to be paid for the modified program;

code for modifying the hardware configuration based on the information regarding the hardware configuration to be modified and modifying the program

configuration of the program which operates on the modified hardware based on the information regarding the hardware configuration to be modified and the information regarding the program configuration to be modified, when license information transmitted from the program contract renewal notification destination is inputted;

code for determining whether or not the hardware configuration and program configuration contained in the transmitted license information match the modified hardware and modified program corresponding to billing information for the configuration modification; and

code for halting the configuration modification of the computer, upon determining that the hardware configuration and program configuration contained in the transmitted license information do not match the modified hardware and modified program corresponding to the [[received]] result as to whether the fee has been paid or not about the billing information.

9. (original) The computer configuration modification program according to Claim 8, wherein the code for modifying comprises code for modifying the configuration of the computer based on a license key which is included in the license information.

10. (original) The computer configuration modification program according to Claim 9, further comprising code for determining whether or not to perform the configuration modification based on a period of validity comprised in the license key.

11. (original) The computer configuration modification program according to Claim 9, further comprising:

code for comparing the hardware configuration with the license key;

code for modifying a hardware amount used by the program of the computer to the permissible hardware amount indicated by the license key, upon determining that the license key contains a permissible hardware amount which is smaller than an actual hardware amount of the hardware configuration; and

code for modifying a hardware amount used by the program of the computer to the actual hardware amount of the hardware configuration, upon determining that the license key contains a permissible hardware amount which is greater than the actual hardware amount of the hardware configuration.

12. (original) The computer configuration modification program according to Claim 8, wherein the code for modifying comprises code for modifying the program configuration based on the modified hardware configuration when the configuration modification is performed.

13. (canceled)

14. (currently amended) A computer configuration modification device comprising:

a memory configured to store hardware configuration information comprising information regarding hardware configuration of a computer, a hardware contract renewal notification destination for the hardware of the computer, information regarding program configuration of the computer, and a program contract renewal notification destination for the program of the computer;

means, upon reception of a configuration modification request for the hardware configuration and program configuration of the computer to be modified, for transmitting the information regarding the hardware configuration to be modified to the hardware contract renewal notification destination in order to modify the fee to be paid for the modified hardware, and transmitting the information regarding the hardware configuration to be modified and the information regarding the program configuration to be modified to the program contract renewal notification destination in order to modify the fee to be paid for the modified program;

means, when license information transmitted from the program contract renewal notification destination is inputted, for modifying the hardware configuration based on the information regarding the hardware configuration to be modified and modifying the program configuration of the program which operates on the modified hardware based on the

information regarding the hardware configuration to be modified and the information regarding the program configuration to be modified;

means for determining whether or not the hardware configuration and program configuration contained in the transmitted license information match the modified hardware and modified program corresponding to billing information for the modified hardware and modified program; and

means, if the hardware configuration and program configuration contained in the transmitted license information do not match the modified hardware and modified program corresponding to the [[received]] result as to whether the fee has been paid or not about the billing information, for halting the configuration modification of the computer.

15. (original) The computer configuration modification device according to Claim 14, further comprising means for modifying the configuration of the computer based on a license key which is included in the license information.

16. (original) The computer configuration modification device according to Claim 15, wherein the license key includes a period of validity for modifying the configuration of the computer.

17. (original) The computer configuration modification device according to Claim 15, further comprising:

means, if the license key contains a permissible hardware amount which is smaller than an actual hardware amount of the hardware configuration, for modifying a hardware amount used by the program of the computer to the permissible hardware amount indicated by the license key, and if the license key contains a permissible hardware amount which is greater than the actual hardware amount of the hardware configuration, for modifying a hardware amount used by the program of the computer to the actual hardware amount of the hardware configuration.

18. (canceled)

19. (currently amended) A computer configuration modification system comprising:

a computer having a modifiable configuration;

a hardware management system configured to perform billing in accordance with hardware configuration of the computer; and

a program management system configured to perform billing in accordance with the program configuration of the computer;

wherein the computer is configured, when a configuration modification request for the hardware configuration and program configuration of the computer is inputted, to transmit to the hardware management system information regarding the hardware configuration to be modified in order to modify the fee to be paid for the hardware following configuration modification, and to transmit to the program management system information regarding the program configuration to be modified together with the information regarding the hardware configuration to be modified in order to modify the fee to be paid for the program following configuration modification;

wherein the hardware management system is configured, when the information regarding the hardware configuration to be modified is inputted, to modify the fee to be paid for the hardware based on the hardware configuration information and to transmit hardware billing information to the computer;

wherein the program management system is configured, when the information regarding the hardware configuration to be modified and the information regarding the program configuration to be modified is inputted, to modify the fee to be paid for the program based on the hardware configuration information and program configuration information and to transmit program billing information to the computer; and

wherein the computer is configured, when the hardware billing information and the program billing information are inputted, to modify the hardware configuration based on the information regarding the hardware configuration to be modified and to modify the program configuration of the program which operates on the modified hardware based on the information regarding the hardware configuration to be modified and the information regarding the program configuration to be modified;

wherein the hardware configuration and the program configuration of the computer are modified based on a license key generated by the program management system;

wherein the license key contains permissible hardware configuration and permissible program configuration, and wherein the computer is configured not to modify the hardware configuration and the program configuration if the hardware configuration and the program configuration corresponding to the result as to whether the fee has been paid or not about the billing information do not match the permissible hardware configuration and the permissible program configuration contained in the license key.

20. (canceled)

21. (previously presented) The computer configuration modification system according to Claim 19, wherein the license key includes a period of validity for modifying the configuration of the computer.

22. (canceled)

23. (original) The computer configuration modification system according to Claim 19, wherein the computer is configured to modify the program configuration based on the modified hardware configuration.